

JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Wildland Fire Management

Program Components	1999 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2000 Budget Request	Change From 1999 (+/-)
A. Wildland Fire Preparedness	19,923	595	+5,675	26,193	+6,270
B. Wildland Fire Operations	22,436	0	+300	22,736	+300
Total Requirements \$(000)	42,359	595	+5,975	48,929	+6,570

AUTHORIZATION

16 U.S.C. 1, the National Park Service Organic Act. **The National Park Service fire management activities are funded through the Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management account appropriated to the Bureau of Land Management. This section is included in the NPS Budget Justifications for the purpose of providing information only.**

OVERVIEW

The National Park Service is responsible for fire management of approximately 84 million acres in seven regions and 378 field units. based on a ten-year average, the NPS annually suppresses 747 wildland fires burning 173,699 acres, manages 69 wildland fires for resource benefits burning 7,513 acres, and conducts 192 planned ignitions on 57,046 acres. The Wildland Fire Management appropriation includes two activities. (1) Wildland Fire Preparedness supports the readiness and capability of the bureau to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment, and fire facilities. (2) Wildland Fire Operations comprises wildfire suppression, emergency rehabilitation, and implementing hazardous fuel reduction projects. Wildfire suppression involves the full range of options appropriate for response to wildland fires, including emergency presuppression, emergency suppression, immediate rehabilitation, and implementing wildland fire for resource benefits operations. Emergency rehabilitation is action to prevent land degradation, resource losses, and other measures necessary to stabilize erodible soils, structures, or other conditions or damage caused by wildland fires. Hazardous fuels reduction includes management of ignited prescribed fire and mechanical fuels reduction.

APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- Ia Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.
- Ib The National Park Service contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.
- IIa Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.
- IIb Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.
- IIIa Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnership programs.
- IIIb Through partnerships with State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.

The program goals for the Wildland Fire Management appropriation are:

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- To effectively manage and control the use and incidence of fire in units of the National Park System in order to safeguard life, protect property, and promote sound ecosystem management practices.
- To manage all fire program activities related to national, regional, and field unit program oversight, facility construction and rehabilitation, pre-operational staffing and preparedness for wildland fire operations, and planning and implementing fuels management projects.
- To provide operational response costs for unpredictable emergency suppression, and prescribed fire and fuels management incidents.

Performance goals for the National Park Service Fire Program have not been separately developed, but have been developed in concert with the Bureau of Land Management (which manages and administers the program) and other DOI bureaus including, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These goals, which are reflected in the FY 1999 Annual Performance Plans for the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management, are compatible with and supportive of the mission goals of the National Park Service.

Relevant Bureau of Land Management Performance Goals

1.04.04	Promote firefighter and public safety related fire suppression activities.
02.03.03	Use fuel treatments (especially fire) to reduce hazardous fuels build-up to improve the health of vegetation communities.

Performance measures for the Wildland Fire Management activities are based on full "Most Efficient Level" (MEL) funding, which represents the most cost-efficient and technically effective fire management program meeting resource objectives and minimizing the cost of suppression and resource losses associated with wildfires. Performance measures incorporated into the Fire Program (FIREPRO) staffing and needs analysis are:

- Ninety-five percent success in initial attack on wildfires in the normal year. The normal year is the third highest occurrence year in the past ten years of record. The success rate for each park is evaluated, and the analysis logic is changed to correct deficiencies, especially deficiencies experienced by parks with similar workload and complexity profiles.
- Adequate permanent staff to provide planning and oversight of all phases of Region, park, and systems fire management programs. The analysis identifies the type, number and location of permanent staffing needs for program management in both preparedness, and prescribed fire management. It also identifies the type, number and location of seasonal staffing needs for initial attack preparedness, wildland fire for resource benefits monitoring, fire effects monitoring, management-ignited project planning, and other types of mechanical fuel reduction project planning.
- Ability to provide qualified personnel to meet internal incident management requirements for overhead teams.
- Ability to provide aircraft and fire engine support for initial and extended attack wildfire suppression operations.
- Capability to monitor and manage 100 percent of wildland fire for resource benefits with in-park resources during the normal year.
- Ability to carry out all hazardous fuel reduction projects ranking above the 25th percentile according to resources-at-risk criteria. These projects are judged to be effective in significantly reducing hazardous fuels and reducing long-term suppression expenditures.
- Ability to carry out all planned ignitions for ecosystem maintenance ranking above the 25th percentile according to ecosystem benefit criteria. These high-ranking projects will significantly contribute to maintaining ecosystem health and preventing hazardous fuel situations from developing. In addition, all projects must pass a statistical cost

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reasonableness screen. This screen identifies projects that fall statistically within acceptable cost variance and is also applied to mechanical fuels reduction projects.

- Ability to monitor the short and long-term effects of all prescribed fire programs to ensure that goals and objectives are being achieved, and to provide feedback into the adaptive management process.
- Adequate facilities to protect capital equipment and firefighting supplies, personnel, and improve interagency response.

Wildland Fire Preparedness

This activity funds the development and implementation of the wildland fire management programs. Wildland Fire Preparedness involves the readiness and capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, and equipment. It also includes the development of plans to apply wildland fire to protect, maintain, and enhance resources and to reduce hazardous fuels. This activity requires the hiring and training of personnel; prevention activities; provision and maintenance of support facilities; purchase of and contracting for equipment, supplies, and support; planning and coordination; policy development and oversight; research; and interagency coordination and direction.

Wildland Fire Operations

This activity funds the development and implementation of the wildland fire emergency suppression, emergency rehabilitation, and hazardous fuels reduction operations programs. Suppression operations include the total spectrum of management actions taken on wildland fires in a safe, cost-effective manner, considering public benefits and values to be protected and consistent with resource objectives and land management plans. Emergency rehabilitation of wildland fire areas is carried out to prevent land degradation, resource damages, and other measures necessary to stabilize erodible soils, structures, or other conditions or damaged caused by wildland fires or by actions taken to suppress wildland fires. This activity includes funding for emergency or extraordinary preparedness as defined in pre-established plans. Hazardous fuels reduction operations include all operational aspects of applying fire as a management tool to reduce fuel loadings and for ecosystem diversity. It also includes mechanical reduction of fuel loadings where the application of fire is not feasible.

The NPS request in FY 2000 for the Wildland Fire Management Fund shows an increase of \$6,570,000 which reflects 84 percent of the Most Efficient Level, plus the ten year average suppression operations, plus an amount added for hazardous fuel operations.